

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Alabama Department of Public Safety

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### **Public Safety Completes Investigation into Allegations of Racial Profiling**

MONTGOMERY — Col. W.M. Coppage, director of the Alabama Department of Public Safety, announced Thursday the completion of an investigation into allegations of racial profiling by a state trooper. The allegations were made by state Rep. Alvin Holmes.

Holmes, in a letter to U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, had called for an investigation into the actions of “the Alabama Department of Public Safety (State Troopers) and all other city and county law enforcement agencies in Alabama for racial profiling.”

Holmes requested the investigation after a black male was issued a citation for speeding and the trooper listed the race of the driver as white.

Coppage said he personally spoke to the driver who was cited and viewed the videotape of the traffic stop. Based upon his review, Coppage said it appears to be nothing more than an error on the part of the trooper in listing the demographic data on the citation. Coppage also said the mistake on the citation had been corrected.

“I am satisfied that there was no sinister intent on the part of the trooper to conceal the fact that the driver of the vehicle which was cited was black,” Coppage said.

“In my conversation with the driver who was cited, he made no complaint regarding being racially profiled. He only expressed concern about the fact the demographic data was incorrect and that he did not believe he was traveling as fast as the trooper stated he was driving,” he added.

Coppage said the violation with which the motorist was cited was not one of the two violations for which law enforcement agencies are required to report demographic data. Those two are seat belt violations and graduated driver license violations.

Coppage renewed his request to the representative to provide any and all data or documentation in support of Holmes’ allegation that there is “a pattern and practice and a course of conduct by law enforcement officers in Alabama to intentionally incorrectly report the race of recipients of traffic citations as a method of hiding their efforts of racial profiling in the state of Alabama.”

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